

COMMENTS FURNISHED BY CHIEFS OF  
BRANCHES, OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR  
OF INTELLIGENCE, WAR DEPARTMENT.

1. EURASIA

General Comments

a. The only source of information which rivals the FBIB are cables received from U.S. Military Attaches and diplomatic missions. The cables are invariably much less detailed than the radio broadcasts which they summarize. For the purposes of Eurasian Branch, the FBIB versions are essential. The few examples listed below represent a small fraction of valuable information received through FBIB. Further examples are complete texts of important foreign and domestic speeches by leading Government figures; details of transportation improvement plans; and economic production statistics, which are generally never available from any other source.

b. In all of the Eastern European countries the government controls and selects the material broadcast on all or part of the transmitters operating in each country. Broadcasts by such government controlled radios, therefore, provide indications of official government policy.

2. WESTERN EUROPE

a. The FBIS Daily Bulletin is of value from three points of view:

- (1) Timeliness
- (2) Originality
- (3) Self-sufficiency

b. TIMELINESS

Information reported in the Daily Bulletin is News. It is very often in the FBIB that items of intelligence value are reported for the first and often only time. As a source of current information, the FBIB is therefore of inestimable value to a researcher seeking to keep abreast of developments in the area of his interest.

c. ORIGINALITY

FBIB items express the views of the country from which the broadcasts originate. Given a knowledge of conditions within any one country, a running check can be kept on events of primary concern to that country, of the propaganda line at any particular time. Even if a report from a reliable source contradicts data reported in a broadcast, the very fact of a false report is of intelligence value.

Of further interest: speeches of important figures are often broadcast. These speeches might or might not reach the researcher. Again from the viewpoint of timeliness, even should these reports come in, the time lag would be considerable.

d. SELF-SUFFICIENCY

As reports from a recognized source, detailing one given development or opinion, the items often need no further amplification.

e. The FBIB is an invaluable instrument for foreign propaganda analysis. Western European stations generally cling to factual reporting whereas Soviet and Eastern European stations spread marxist gospel. It is felt that FBIB could be even more useful than it is at the present time (and the above examples should help to make that usefulness clear) if it were used for a thoroughgoing study of propaganda lines and switches as an index to Soviet policy, in particular. (This holds true of all countries where opinion is controlled; Spain is another important example).

f. Reading of FBIB limits the need to read a mass of foreign newspapers since press reviews are generally a feature of foreign broadcasts.

3. CHINA-MANCHURIA

2. In general, the FBIB coverage on Chinese language newspapers comes to us much more promptly than any other such coverage by other agencies. Further, the FBIB monitors the Yen'an Radio broadcasts 24 hours a day, and is the only US agency which does so. Many important developments which are summarized or merely mentioned in US newspapers--such as the Chinese Company Law--are reported in full in the FBIB. The rendition of these complete texts is valuable to the Political Section, Far East Branch.

4. SOUTHEAST ASIA

a. With virtual revolutions being carried on in French Indo-China, Java and Sumatra, it is impossible to keep track of current events or anticipate future events without a knowledge of what is happening within the countries, in southeast Asia particularly, the lack of U.S. interest in the area results in limited US press coverage. The War Department has no representatives in French Indo-China, Java or Sumatra. There are two consular offices in French Indo-China and one in Java. Were these State Department officials to cover the area completely for news, the cable charges would be enormous. This section finds FBIB valuable in that its reports confirm arrivals of troops, disorderly incidents, acts of war, and other items which the powers on the spot attempt to censor through regular communication channels.

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6. LATIN AMERICA

a. The FBIB is an immediate source of information. This same information may subsequently reach this office through regular channels, but in many cases the FBIB is the only source. The broadcasts monitored by the FBIB include press reports from news agencies not operating in this country and not received by this office. The information includes (a) texts of speeches by officials who formulate government policy, (b) editorials from public opinion forming newspapers and the official government press, and (c) reports of arrivals, departures, and appointments of military, and political and economic personalities of significance.

b. The FBIB is directed as to subjects of interest to this office and the Daily Report comes to us as screened information, thus eliminating perusal of lengthy ticker reports from news services. The present world situation is such that information on Latin American countries is usually omitted by news services of this country. The FBIB section devoted to Latin America assures that this office will receive news on this area even though U.S. press services do not consider the subject of sufficient general public interest to publish.

c. The FBIB Daily Report furnishes this office a convenient chronological file of events referred to daily for date of events or details. There have been many instances where information has reached this office as classified information which has been monitored and reported by the FBIB thus making unnecessary our passing the information on as classified or previously unknown.

d. In addition to being a timely current events record, items appearing in the FBIB furnish this office with leads on information that will be forthcoming from Military Attaches. In cases where no report is forwarded from the field, the FBIB serves as a reference in making requests for information to our field agencies.